

## Report Item 11

### Report to Town Council 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017

#### Purchase of "Queenie".

##### 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To inform the Town Council of the action taken by the Town Clerk under the provisions of Financial Regulations in respect of emergency expenditure necessary to secure the purchase of the hare statue known as "Queenie".

##### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Town Council participated in the Cotswold Hare Trail this year and, once decorated, the Town Council hare was displayed at the entrance to the Tourist Information Centre.
- 2.2 The hare received numerous positive comments about the style and quality of the decoration undertaken by a local artist.
- 2.3 Several enquiries were made about the future of the hare and general trend favoured it staying in Malmesbury at the end of the Hare Trail competition.
- 2.4 The rules governing the event were such that all hares were required to be returned to Cheltenham for auction, the proceeds going to charity.
- 2.5 The Community and Town Promotion Committee was originally considering crowd funding as an option to secure the hare but no scheme was forthcoming in time for the auction.
- 2.6 A former councillor sought public donations in an attempt to secure the hare for Malmesbury and was required to attend the auction to formally bid.
- 2.7 The Town Mayor and Chair of Policy and Resources Committee were approached with a view to seeing the Town Council would be able to contribute.
- 2.8 There being no time in which to call an extraordinary meeting the Town Clerk took the view that as this could be seen as an emergency it would be appropriate to use the relevant clause in Financial Regulations provided the hare remained the property of the Town Council.

##### 3. Proposals

- 3.1 The former Town Councillor was able to attend the auction knowing that the Town Council would be prepared to support a bid to enhance the money already pledged or collected.
- 3.2 The hare was acquired for the sum of £3,500, the Town Council's contribution being £530 and the labour cost of collection from Cheltenham.

##### 4. Financial implications and risks

- 4.1 The expenditure falls within the level permitted under Financial Regulations and this was supported by the Town Mayor and the Chair of Policy and Resources committee in advance of the auction.

- 4.2 The money concerned has been debited to the Marketing budget held by the Community and Town Promotion Committee as the hare may be viewed as marketing and publicity.
- 5 Recommendations
- 5.1 The Town Council is requested to support the actions taken by the Town Clerk in securing the hare for use in Malmesbury.

Jeff Penfold  
Town Clerk  
23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017